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A MANDÆAN HYMN ON THE SOUL.

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Although many scholars have written on the lyrical poetry of the Mandæans, no specimens have as yet been given, despite the fact that Brandt has touched on "the exit of the soul" in his *Mandäische Religion*. This work, however, is general in character, and gives only a cursory view of the beliefs on this subject. To illustrate the Mandæan teachings concerning the soul, I have selected a hymn of thirty-six lines from the *Qolasta* (ed. Euting, p. 11a, l. 18 to p. 12a, l. 20), as a summary of the doctrines of their religion.

Going toward a river, the soul, in the poet's vision, meets Shitil, one of the first emanations, whom it urges to accompany it to receive baptism "in the name of life." When asked what witnesses it can bring to vouch for the good deeds which it has done in the body, it names the sun, the moon, and the everlasting fire, but it receives answer that all these will fail it, and that it can therefore have no witness for life eternal. Finally, however, it cites as witnesses the Jordan, the Peḥta, the Sundays, charitable deeds, the temples, and God himself. These are the true witnesses, who can give it entrance to the future world.

Though this brief fragment breaks off at this point, it affords a clear idea of the view of the future state of the soul according to the religion of the Mandæans.

I.

בשומא דחייא!
מן יארדנא סילקית
בכאנא דנישמאתא פיגית
בכאנא פיגית דנישמאתא
דבאבון שיתיל מיתכארכיא
אמרילא:
בהאיאך אבון שיתיל
אסגיא מינאיאך ליארדנא
עו מאסגיא מינאיכין ליארדנא!

מֶן נִחְוִיָּא עֲלֹאֲיֶכּוֹן סֹאחֲדָא הָאדָא?
 דְּדִנְיָא שְׁאֲמִישׁ עֲלֹאֲיָאן נִחְוִיָּא בְּסֹאחֲדִיא
 לֹא הוּא דְּבִאֲיִנָּא
 וְלֹא הוּא דְּנִישְׁמַאֲתָא צֹאבִיא!
 שְׁאֲמִישׁ דְּאֲמֹרְתִין עֲלֹא
 קֹאמִית, דְּנָא, חֹאשִׁיךְ אֲרֹאב
 שְׁאֲמִישׁ דְּאֲמֹרְתִין עֲלֹא
 שְׁאֲמִישׁ מִיבְטָאֵל בֹּאטִיל
 חִיבְטָאֵל בֹּאטִיל שְׁאֲמִישׁ
 וְסֹגְדָא מִיבְטָאֵל בֹּאטִילִיא

II.

מֶן יֹאדְנָא סִילְקִית
 בְּכֹאנָא דְּנִישְׁמַאֲתָא פִּיגִית
 בְּכֹאנָא פִּיגִית דְּנִישְׁמַאֲתָא
 דְּבֹאבּוֹן שִׁתִּיל מִיתְּכֹאֲרִיָּא
 אֲמִרִילָא!
 בְּחֹאֲיָאךְ אֲבּוֹן שִׁתִּיל
 אֲסִגִּיא מִינֵאֲיָאן לִיֹּאדְנָא
 עוּ מֵאֲסִגִּינָא מִינֵאֲכִין לִיֹּאדְנָא!
 מֶן נִחְוִיָּא עֲלֹאֲיֶכּוֹן סֹאחֲדָא הָאדָא?
 דְּדִנְיָא סִירָא עֲלֹאֲיָאן נִחְוִיָּא בְּסֹאחֲדִיא!
 לֹא הוּא דְּבִאֲיִנָּא
 וְלֹא הוּא דְּנִישְׁמַאֲתָא צֹאבִיא!
 סִירָא דְּאֲמֹרְתִין עֲלֹא
 חֹאשִׁיךְ, דְּנָא, קֹאמִית אֲרֹאב
 סִירָא דְּאֲמֹרְתִין עֲלֹא
 סִירָא מִיבְטָאֵל בֹּאטִיל
 מִיבְטָאֵל בֹּאטִיל סִירָא
 וְסֹגְדָא מִיבְטָאֵל בֹּאטִילִיא

III.

מֶן יֹאדְנָא סִילְקִית
 בְּכֹאנָא דְּנִישְׁמַאֲתָא פִּיגִית
 בְּכֹאנָא פִּיגִית דְּנִישְׁמַאֲתָא
 דְּבֹאבּוֹן שִׁתִּיל מִיתְּכֹאֲרִיָּא
 אֲמִרִילָא!
 בְּחֹאֲיָאךְ אֲבּוֹן שִׁתִּיל
 אֲסִגִּיא מִינֵאֲיָאן לִיֹּאדְנָא
 עוּ מֵאֲסִגִּינָא מִינֵאֲכִין לִיֹּאדְנָא

מֵאֵן נִיחּוּיָא עֲלֹאֲוֵיכִין סֹאחֲדָא הָאדָא ?
 דִּיאֶקִיד נּוּרָא עֲלֹאֲוֵיָאן נִיחּוּיָא בִסֹאחֲדִיָא !
 לֹא הוּא דְבִאֲיִינָא
 וְלֹא הוּא דְנִישְמַתָּא צִאבִיָא !
 נּוּרָא דְאֲמֹרְתִין עֲלָא
 זִיבְנָא בִיוּמָא אֲבֵדָא
 נּוּרָא דְאֲמֹרְתִין עֲלָא
 נּוּרָא תִיבְטָאֵל בֹּאטִיל
 תִיבְטָאֵל בֹּאטִיל נּוּרָא
 וְסֹגֲדָא מִיבְטָאֵל בֹּאטִילִיא

IV.

מֵן יֹאֲרֵדְנָא סִילְקִית
 בִּכְאֲנָא דְנִישְמַתָּא פִיגִית
 בִּכְאֲנָא פִיגִית דְנִישְמַתָּא
 דְבֹאבּוֹן שִיתִיל מִיתְכֹאֲרִיָא
 אֲמִרִילָא :
 בַּחֲוִיאָךְ אֲבּוֹן שִיתִיל
 אֲסֻגִיָא מִינֵאִיאָן לִיֹאֲרֵדְנָא
 עוּ מֵאֲסֻגִיָא מִינֵאִיכּוֹן לִיֹאֲרֵדְנָא
 מֵאֵן נִיחּוּיָא עֲלֹאֲוֵיכִין סֹאחֲדָא ?
 יֹאֲרֵדְנָא וְחִרִין כִּיפָא עֲלֹאֲוֵיָאן נִיחּוּיָא בִסֹאחֲדִיָא
 פִיחֲתָא וְכוּשְטָא וּמֵאֲמִיבּוּגָא עֲלֹאֲוֵיָאן נִיחּוּיָא בִסֹאחֲדִיָא
 חֲאֲבִשְאֲבָא וְכֹאנָא דְזִידְקָא עֲלֹאֲוֵיָאן נִיחּוּיָא בִסֹאחֲדִיָא
 מֵאֲשְכְנָא וּמֵאֲסֻגִיָדְנֹאבָא עֲלֹאֲוֵיָאן נִיחּוּיָא בִסֹאחֲדִיָא
 זִידְקָא דְבִכְאֶפְאִיאָן עֲלֹאֲוֵיָאן נִיחּוּיָא בִסֹאחֲדִיָא
 אֲבּוֹן דְּבִרִישְאִיאָן עֲלֹאֲוֵיָאן נִיחּוּיָא בִסֹאחֲדִיָא
 חֲאֲזִין הוּ דְבִאֲיִינָא
 חֲאֲזִין נִישְמַתָּא דְצִאבּוּרִיָא
 כֵּד עֲסֹאק לְבִית חֵיָא, וְעִיאֲסֻגִיָא לְדֹאֲוִרָא תֹאקְנָא
 כֵּד נִישְאִילֹנָאן דְחֵיָא נִיתּוֹן סֹאחֲדִיָא נִיסִיחֲדוֹן
 סֹאחֲדִיָא דִינּוֹן דְכוּשְטָא, וְשֹאֲרִירָא כּוֹל דְאֲמִרִיָא !
 וְחֵיָא זֹאכִין

I.

In the name of life!
 From the Jordan I ascended,
 The primal form of the soul I met;
 I met the primal form of the soul,
 Which is inclosed in our father Shitil;
 I spake to him:

By thy life, O Father Shitil,
 Go thou with us unto the Jordan,
 Or I shall go with you unto the Jordan!
 Will there be a witness with you?
 The setting sun shall testify for us.
 It is not this which I desire,
 Nor is it this which doth baptize the soul.
 The sun of which thou speakest
 Arose, set, it grew dark, the evening came on;
 The sun of which thou speakest,
 The sun is destroyed,
 Destroyed is the sun,
 And they who worship him are annihilated.

II.

From the Jordan I ascended,
 The primal form of the soul I met;
 I met the primal form of the soul,
 Which is inclosed in our father Shitil;
 I spake to him:
 By thy life, O Father Shitil,
 Go thou with us unto the Jordan,
 Or I shall go with you unto the Jordan!
 Will there be a witness with you?
 The setting moon shall testify for us.
 It is not this which I desire,
 Nor is it this which doth baptize the soul.
 The moon of which thou speakest,
 It grew dark, set, arose, the evening came on;
 The moon of which thou speakest,
 The moon is destroyed,
 Destroyed is the moon,
 And they who worship it are annihilated.

III.

From the Jordan I ascended,
 The primal form of the soul I met;
 I met the primal form of the soul,
 Which is inclosed in our father Shitil;
 I spake to him:
 By thy life, O Father Shitil,
 Go thou with us unto the Jordan,
 Or I shall go with you unto the Jordan!
 Will there be a witness with you?
 The blazing fire shall testify for us.
 It is not this which I desire,
 Nor is it this which doth baptize the soul.

The fire of which thou speakest
 Will perish some time in the day.
 The fire of which thou speakest,
 The fire is dead,
 Dead is the fire,
 And they who worship it are annihilated.

IV.

From the Jordan I ascended,
 The primal form of the soul I met;
 I met the primal form of the soul,
 Which is inclosed in our father Shitil;
 I spake to him:
 By thy life, O Father Shitil,
 Go thou with us unto the Jordan,
 Or I shall go with you unto the Jordan!
 Will there be witnesses with you?
 The Jordan and its two banks will testify for us,
 The Peḥta and Kushta and Mambuga will testify for us,
 Sundays and the foundations of almsgiving will testify for us,
 The dwelling and the house in which we thrive will testify for us,
 The almsgiving from our hands will testify for us,
 Our father, who standeth at our head, will testify for us.
 It is this which we desire,
 And it is this which doth baptize our soul.
 And when I ascend to the house of the life, and go to the abode of
 glory,
 And when I am asked what witnesses of life shall testify for us,
 Then there are witnesses of truth, and true is all they say!
 And life is victorious. . . .

NOTES.

כאנא "base, trunk," one of the sporadic ancient words in Mandæan with a change of meaning (see Nöldeke, *Mandaäische Grammatik*, xxviii).

קושטא "justice," form **קושטא** instead of **קושטא** (Nöldeke, *loc. cit.*, 39, 104). In Mandæan the word has become restricted in meaning to religious ceremonies, and may accordingly be compared for connotation with the Assyrian "to take the hands of Bel" (see Brandt, *Mandaäische Religion*, 200, 201).

פירחא "host, holy wafer," metathesis instead of **פירחא**. In Mandæan this word means only the abode of glory (see Levy, *Wörterbuch*, s. v. **פירחא**, Sidra Rabba, ed. Petermann, p. 8, 8).

מאמבונא "weave," but the meaning is the wine belonging to the church service. **מפירא** = **מפירא** (see Brandt, *loc. cit.*, 109, 110).

פנינא perfect first person of the Pe'al of **פנע** "to meet," which becomes **בנע** in Mandæan by assimilation of **נ** to the following **פ**.

באיינא active participle of the Pe'al of the tert. yod **באיינא**, "to look out, implore," plus the pronoun of the first person (see Nöldeke, *loc. cit.*, 257, 259).

אריא perfect of the Pe'al of **פער** "evening comes on." It is always written with **א** instead of **ע** (Nöldeke, *loc. cit.*, 241).